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Guest Commentary

The Threat and the Need for Intelligence

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IN A BUSINESS and a world of few absolutes, one thing is certain: our need as a nation for superior intelligence continues to grow. Throughout the world, our country faces serious threats to its security and national interests. These threats include social, economic and political instability, as well as outright military aggression.

Today, we need to be concerned about a greater variety of intelligence problems. In addition to the traditional military and political analysis of different countries, we are beginning to focus more attention on global issues—terrorism, political insurgency, nuclear proliferation and the pilfering of our technology—that cut across national boundaries.

The Soviet Union is still our number one intelligence problem. Its military build-up continues relentlessly; yet the threat from the Kremlin is much broader than just

direct military aggression. Enhanced Soviet military power will be used as a political weapon giving additional force and thrust to diplomatic and propaganda initiatives. With a skillful array of associates, Moscow is using a variety of tactics—political, diplomatic, subversive and insurgent—to expand Soviet influence and destabilize governments. Right now, in concert with Cuba, we see them attempting to bring the struggle to our own backyard in Central America.

As the demands for more information grow, so do the demands on our intelligence collection systems increase. We need a sufficient variety of modern collection methods, both human and technical. We cannot emphasize one method above the other since they only act well in concert. Each collection method answers its own special questions. None can stand alone. The validity of intelligence assessments de-

pends upon multiple sources of information.

New systems must have two major characteristics: flexibility and timeliness. It is not enough that we give our national leaders the right information; we must give it to them at the right moment. It is not enough that we know all there is to know about today's problems; we must be able to anticipate tomorrow's crises and be able to shift our resources appropriately.

We have been hard at work rebuilding our nation's intelligence service since the draw down of the 1970s. We will continue doing our best to keep our country's leaders apprised of the dangers and opportunities, to help them bring timely and effective initiatives to bear. In today's complex world we cannot afford to have an intelligence service that is anything but the best.

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